

Message Text

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ACTION AGRE-00

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 0965

PASS USDA/FAS/MINYARD/LANKFORD

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAGR UR

SUBJECT: ASA 1977 MD ACTIVITIES

1. SUMMARY: AMERICAN SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION (ASA) IS ATTEMPTING, WITH FULL USDA SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT, TO INITIATE MARKET DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR SOYBEANS AND PRODUCTS IN SU. THIS SUMMARIZES CERTAIN AG.ATT. OFFICE ACTIVITIES AND CONCLUSIONS ON MATTER. CLASSIFICATION NEEDED DUE CANDIDNESS ON SOVIET AGENCIES AND CONTACTS, BUT USDA AUTHORIZED TO FULLY COMMUNICATE SUBSTANCE TO ASA.

2. AG.ATT. OFFICE SENT LETTERS TO SOVIET AGENCIES, WHICH PARTICIPATED IN SOY PROTEIN SEMINAR, THANKING THEM FOR ATTENDING AND SOLICITING SUGGESTIONS AS TO FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES TO SEMINAR IN DECEMBER. EXAMPLES OF TYPES OF COOPERATIVE PROJECTS WHICH MIGHT BE UNDERTAKEN WERE INCLUDED.

3. MIN. PROCUREMENT AND EXPORTKHEB HAVE RESPONDED IN NEGATIVE. DOUBTING THAT POSITIVE REPLIES WOULD BE RECEIVED WITHOUT PERSONAL APPOINTMENTS, AG.ATT. HAS BEEN ATTEMPTING, SINCE JANUARY 1, TO ARRANGE MEETINGS WITH STATE COMMITTEE FOR S&T (STATE COM), MIN. FOOD
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AND MEAT INSTITUTE WITH NO SUCCESS TO DATE. EXERCISE WILL, NEVERTHELESS, BE COMPLETED AND REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 1977 ASA PROGRAM ACTIVITIES FORWARDED BY EARLY FEBRUARY LATEST.

4. TWO NEW PROJECT LEADS APPEAR PROMISING AT THIS TIME. THEY ARE SPONSORS MVP BY AY OF SOVIET SOY OIL REFINING

AND SOY PROTEIN MEAT EXTENDER TEAMS TO U.S. FORMER WOULD CONSIST OF SPECIALISTS FROM MIN. FOOD, AND LATTER OF MEAT INSTITUTE OFFICIALS, INCLUDING GORBATOV (EX-DIRECTOR). APPOINTMENT FOR NEXT TUESDAY ARRANGED AT MIN. FOOD TO OBTAIN READING ON THEIR INTEREST IN SUCH AN OIL TEAM, PROVIDED ASA PPROVES. LETTER SENT GORBATOV DECEMBER 23 ASKING FOR DETAILS ON COMPOSITION AND ITINERARY SUGGESTIONS FOR EXTENDER TEAMS, AGAIN PROVIDED ASA IS INTERESTED. FYI, OBTAINED FAVORABLE INITIAL READING ON THIS FROM GORBATOV THROUGH THIRD PARTY. OTHER ACTIVITY WHICH APPEARS ON TRACK IS LISHCHENKO VISIT, WHICH IS DISCUSSED IN PARA 7.

5. RECEIVED GOOD LETTER FROM BLANKENSHIP THIS WEEK IN WHICH HE HAS DONE EXCELLENT JOB OF DEVELOPING AND PROPOSING OPTIMAL ASA MD PROGRAM FOR SU FOR FY 77-78 PERIOD WHICH MAXIMIZES US INTEREST ACHIEVEMENT AT MINIMUM COST. DIFFICULTY IS THAT WITH PRESENT STATUS OF US-USSR RELATION; USDA AND ASA ARE SIMPLY NOT CAPABLE OF IMPLEMENTING SUCH PROGRAMS HERE AND NOW. INSTEAD, TO GET THESE ACTIVITIES MOVING, IT IS ONLY POSSIBLE TO PROPOSE ACTIVITIES WHICH CLEARLY BENEFIT THE SOVIETS, BUT WHICH ARE ALSO IN OUR MUTUAL INTEREST. NOR, IN OUR JUDGMENT, WOULD IT BE BENEFICIAL TO STRIVE FOR LOWEST PROGRAM COST. NOW IS TIME TO BUILD ASA (AND SIMULTANEOUSLY ALL OTHER COOPERATOR) ACCEPTANCE AND REPUTATION. WHEN HERE PJ SPRING, BLANKENSHIP WILL BE ABLE TO JUDGE BEST FOR HIMSELF, BUT SU SITUATION NOT COMPARABLE TO ANY OTHER COUNTRY IN WHICH ASA OPERATES. HE WILL ALSO BE ABLE TO FOLLOW THROUGH ON OTHER SUGGESTED
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PROJECTS, MANY OF WHICH ARE VERY GOOD, E.G., SENDING FEED AND OIL SPECIALISTS TO SU.

6. SEEING STATE COMM. OFFICIALS NEXT WEEK. HOWEVER, IF THIS MEETING AND OTHER DISCUSSIONS CONFIRM OUR PRESENT CONVICTION, WE EXPECT TO PROPOSE THAT ASA NOT SIGN ANY GENERAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH THIS AGENCY FOR TIME BEING. ON CONTRARY, IT APPEARS BEST TO ATTEMPT TO WORK DIRECTLY WITH MINISTRIES INVOLVED ON PROJECT BY PROJECT BASIS, E.G., OIL REFINING-- MIN. FOOD; FEEDMILLING -- MIN. PROCUREMENT, ETC. STATE COMM. IS POWERFUL "SUPER MINISTRY" WITH SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAIN-LINING (PRIORITY ASSIGNMENT) FOR SU TECHNOLOGICAL IMPROVEMENT EFFORT, BUT AGENCY IS, UNFORTUNATELY, OVERBURDENED AND UNDER-STAFFED AND SAME AUTHORITY, IF NEGATIVE, WOULD PREVENT US FROM IMPLEMENTING ANY PROGRAM WHATEVER, AND AT BEST MIGHT ONLY CONSTITUTE AN ADDITIONAL BEAUROCRATIC APPROVAL LEVEL FOR OUR PROGRAM. TO OBTAIN

ABOVE APPOINTMENT, INCIDENTALLY, TOOK AT LEAST A DOZEN PHONE CALLS OVER TWO WEEK TIME PERIOD, AND WE STILL HAVE NO MEETING DATE OR TIME FIXED.

7. LISHCHENKO WAS ADVISED OF AND APPROVED IN ADVANCE OF STRATEGY DESCRIBED IN PARA. 2. HE ALSO INFORMED US AT TIME THAT HE CAN PLAY NO, REPEAT NO, HELPFUL ROLE IN ASA PROGRAM PLANNING. IN FACT, HE INDICATED THAT HIS INPUT IS GENERALLY LIMITED TO OVERALL FAVORABLE POSITIONS TAKEN BY US-CANADA INSTITUTE AS TO IMPORTANCE OF SOYBEANS AND PRODUCTS TO SU AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOYBEAN PRODUCTION, REPEAT PRODUCTION, UTILIZATION AND INDUSTRIAL PROCESSING CAPACITIES IN USSR. THIS INCLUDES PAPERS PREPARED FOR DIRECTOR ARBATOV'S SIGNATURE AND LISHCHENKO'S OWN ARTICLES. LISHCHENKO MAY WELL BE ABLE TO ASSIST ALSO ON US MD MATTERS ON OCCASION WITH PARTY FUNCTIONARIES AND AT MINISTERIAL

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LEVEL IN CERTAIN MINISTRIES. PROBLEM IS THAT KIND AND FREQUENCY OF HELP HE CAN RENDER IS NOT ONLY LIMITED, BUT ALSO UNPREDICTABLE. IT IS, NONETHELESS, IMPORTANT. FOR EXAMPLE, HE ASKED US TO CONTACT ASA AND TRANSMIT FOLLOWING REQUEST WHICH HE HAS ALREADY FORWARDED TO THEM BY LETTER. THEREIN HE ASKS IF IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE TO EXPAND ASA'S INVITATION TO SPEAK AT THEIR ANNUAL MEETING IN AUGUST TO INCLUDE TWO ADDITIONAL PERSONS, A JOURNALIST AND AN ADMINISTRATOR (POSSIBLY HEAD OF VLADIVOSTOK SOYA INSTITUTE, OR BURYAKOV, CHIEF OF OILSEED PRODUCTION AT MIN. AG.), AND THAT THEIR VISIT COVER AUGUST 5-20 PERIOD INSTEAD OF JUST THREE DAYS. ITINERARY WOULD INCLUDE SOY PRODUCTION AND UTILIZATION IN US, INCLUDING RESEARCH. HIS STATED PURPOSE IS TO RESTRUCTURE HIS VISIT IN ORDER TO BETTER PUBLICIZE THE US SOYBEAN SUCCESS STORY TO THE SOVIET PEOPLE. WE STRONGLY ENDORSE THIS ACTIVITY AND RECOMMEND THAT IT BE APPROVED IN PRINCIPLE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THIS CASE, INCIDENTALLY, ILLUSTRATES, IN OUR VIEW, THE KIND OF FLEXIBILITY WHICH ASA WILL NEED AT THIS STAGE OF PROGRAM PLANNING FOR SU.

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